

## A Partial Reedition of 4Q26a (4QLeviticus<sup>e</sup>): A New Fragment and a Reinterpretation

### Abstract

A new identification of a 4Q26a (4QLeviticus<sup>e</sup>) fragment, as well as the reinterpretation on the basis of new photographs of 4Q26a frag. 8 as preserving Lev 20:2-4, rather than Lev 22:4-6, requires a reedition of two sections of the manuscript, and enables a partial material reconstruction of the scroll.

### Keywords:

Leviticus - 4Q26a - unidentified fragment - textual reconstruction - new photographs

In 1994 Emanuel Tov published nine fragments as 4Q26a (4QLev<sup>e</sup>) in *DJD XIV*.<sup>1</sup> Based on the identification of a hitherto unidentified fragment on PAM 43.692 that can be assigned to 4Q26a, and the reinterpretation on the basis of new photographs of 4Q26a frag. 8, I present here a partial reedition of 4Q26a frags. 3-9.

### 1. Frags. 3+4+8 (Lev 19:34–20:4)

Tov published separately frag. 3 (Lev 19:34-37), frag. 4 (Lev 20:1-3), and frag. 8 (Lev 22:4-6). He commented that both frags. 3 and 8 “have stitches at the left side and are probably from the ends of two successive sheets.”<sup>2</sup> However, the transcription of frag. 8 and its identification with Lev 22:4-6 are in need of correction. Instead, the fragment preserves parts of Lev 20:2-4. Frags. 3 and 8 belong to the same column and can physically be joined: the bottom of frag. 3 joins to the top of frag. 8,<sup>3</sup> so that we have the left end of a sheet over a height of eleven lines. Frag. 3 preserves some of the text of lines 1-5, and part of the margin and the stitching up to line 8; frag. 4, which can be placed to the right of frag. 8, has some text from the middle of lines 7-10; frag. 8 preserves the end of lines 8-11 as well as the margin and the stitching.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Edited by Emanuel Tov in *Qumran Cave 4 VII: Genesis to Numbers* (DJD XII; Oxford: Clarendon, 1994), 197-201, pl. XXXVII. In the edition of 4Q25 he includes (p. 192) three small unidentified fragments (frags. 7-9) “which have been handed down as belonging to either 4QLev<sup>c</sup> or 4QLev<sup>e</sup>.” Since 4Q25 frag. 8 reads ]נפלאוה[ (corrected reading) in line 1, it does not belong to a Leviticus manuscript.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 197.

<sup>3</sup>The lowest stitching hole of frag. 3 and the highest stitching hole of frag. 8 are consecutive, i.e., that 3 mm of the very left edge are lacking. However, along the diagonal at the bottom of frag. 3 and the top of frag. 8 there is a perfect join.

<sup>4</sup>The placement of frags. 3, 4, and 8 on PAM 42.741 more or less approximates the correct relationship, proposed in this note. Nonetheless, the PAM 42.741 arrangement has been changed

[תונו אתו כאזרח מכם יהיה לכם הגר הגר אתכם ואהב]	1
[לו כמוד כי גרים הייתם בארץ מצרים אני ]יהוה אלהיכם	2
[לא תעשו עול במשפט במדה במשקל ו]במשורה אבני צ[ד]ק	3
[איפת צדק והין צדק יהיה לכם אני יהו]ה אלהיכם אשר	4
[הוצאתי אתכם מארץ מצרים ושמרתם את כל חק]ת[י] ו[את]	5
[כל משפטי ועשיתם אתם אני יהוה vacat ]	6
[וידבר יהוה אל משה לא]מ[ו] ואל[ בני ישראל תדבר איש איש]	7
[מבני ישראל ומן הגר] הגר בישרא[ל] אשר יתן מזרעו למ[ך]	8
[מות יומת עם הארץ] י[ר]גמהו[ן] באבן ואני אתן את פני [באיש]	9
[ההוא והכרתי את]ו מ[ך] [רב עמו כי מזרעו נתן למלך למ[ען] טמא]	10
[את מקדשי ולחלל את שם קדשי ואם העלם יעלימו עם הארץ]	11

I have retained Tov's *DJD XIV* transcription for lines 1-5, though I am tempted to read in line 5 the remnants of a *ṭeṭ* rather than *taw*, which—if correct—may suggest the reading משפ[ט] ו[את]. The textual reconstruction of lines 7-11 shows that line 6 ended with a *vacat*, and that the new section of Lev 20:1 began at the beginning of line 7. Of line 6 only the left margin is preserved. The bottom part of frag. 4 remains the very upper part of three letters of line 10, but these might just as well be of מקר. New photographs facilitate the reading of frag. 8, and show that most of Tov's transcriptions of this fragment should be corrected.<sup>5</sup>

## 2. Frags. 5+5a (Lev 20:27–21:4)

PAM 43.692, a photograph of one of the museum plates with largely unidentified Qumran Cave 4 fragments, contains a fragment (PAM 43.692 frag. 5) which can be identified as belonging to 4Q26a (4QLev<sup>e</sup>). The photo of the fragment is included in *DJD XXXIII*,<sup>6</sup> but the fragment has not been transcribed in the volume because it is lacking from the corresponding Museum Plate #91.<sup>7</sup> The

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on PAM 43.036.

<sup>5</sup>For new full spectrum colour as well as infrared images of virtually all 4Q26a fragments, cf. the Leon Levy Digital Library on [www.deadseascrolls.org.il](http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il).

<sup>6</sup>Dana M. Pike and Andrew C. Skinner, *Qumran Cave 4 XXXIII: Unidentified Fragments* (*DJD XXXIII*; Oxford: Clarendon, 2001), plate XXXI. The editors only mention that it preserves the top margin, but not a straight edge (p. 235).

<sup>7</sup>The editors of volume XXXIII state that “only those fragments that contain at least one complete word or convincing restoration are transcribed” but that the edition “does not provide transcriptions of fragments that have been removed from the museum plates corresponding to the PAM photographs presented here” (*DJD XXXIII*, 6). Due to an error or typo, the *DJD* edition states that PAM 43.692 frag. 6 is no longer located on Mus. Inv. 91, but an inventory of missing fragments (from the plates in comparison to the last taken PAM photographs) in July 1994 shows that actually frag. 5 is lacking. The same inventory does not show frag. 5 to have been added to any other museum plate.

fragment has not been transferred to Museum Plate #197 which contains the 4Q26a fragments. Its present location is unknown.

PAM 43.692 frag. 5 (which I will call 4Q26a frag. 5a) can be placed in the same lines as 4Q26a frag. 5, with which it forms a distant join. Tov indicated that frag. 5 “may have contained the first column of a sheet” and the “the blots of ink may represent irregularly placed guiding dots.”<sup>8</sup> Indeed, 4Q26a 5 (consisting of two joined pieces)<sup>9</sup> preserves not only the right margin, but even remnants of the stitching,<sup>10</sup> thus confirming that it comes from the first column of a sheet. Tov, transcribed a faint trace at the top of the left piece of frag. 5 as the remnant of a letter. However, the large top margin of frag. 5a (measuring 2.3 cm) shows that the word אוב of frag. 5 is the first word of the first line of the column, and hence also of the new sheet. I present here a transcription of 4Q26a frags. 5 + 5a, adopting, like the *DJD* edition, the Masoretic text for the reconstructed words.

	<i>top margin</i>	
אוב או ידע	[ני מות יומתו באבן ירגמו] ואתם [ד] מיהם	1
ויאמר יהוה	[אל משה אמר אל הכהנים] בני אה [רן ואמרת אלהם לנפש לא]	2
יטמא בעמו	[כי אם לשארו הקרב אליו] לא [מו ולאביו ולבנו ולבתו]	3
ולאחי	[ו] אחתו הבתולה הקרובה אליו אשר לא היתה לאיש לה יטמא	4
	[ו] לא	5

In line 1, the remnants ]ו אתם] match the reading of the Masoretic text, בָּאֲבָן יִרְגְּמוּ אֹתָם, which attaches the object suffix to the nota accusativi, as against the Samaritan text, באבנים תרגמו, which adds the object suffix immediately to the verb. However, it still remains possible that 4Q26a agreed with the Samaritan text (and LXX λίθοις λιθοβολήσατε αὐτούς) with respect to the other variants (plural “stones” and/or second person, against the Masoretic singular “stone” and third person), since the few remains of 4Q26a sometimes agree with the Masoretic tradition against the Samaritan one, and sometimes the other way around.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, for reasons of spacing one may prefer to reconstruct in line 1 the plural באבנים, but arguments of space cannot help us to choose between תרגמו or ירגמו. The traces of frag. 5a in line 3 can correspond to either לאביו or לאמו, so that it remains unclear whether to read לאמו ולאביו with the Masoretic text, or לאביו ולאמו with the Samaritan (and LXX ἐπὶ πατρὶ καὶ μητρί).

### 3. Comments on the reading of other fragments

<sup>8</sup>Tov, *DJD XIV*, 199.

<sup>9</sup>Only the right part of 4Q26a 5 is on PAM 42.741, but the two parts are joined on PAM 43.036.

<sup>10</sup>See most clearly <http://www.deadseascrolls.org.il/explore-the-archive/image/B-359503>.

<sup>11</sup>See the listings of variants in *DJD XIV*, and the brief summary in Armin Lange, *Handbuch der Textfunde vom Toten Meer. Band 1: Die Handschriften biblischer Bücher von Qumran und den anderen Fundorten* (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2009), 72.

In frag. 7 line 5, the two traces before *sin/shin*, suggest ]ל מַש[, and not ]ל יֵש[, even though the stance of the two traces is not like that of the other *mems*. Hence, it makes most sense to read there ]ל מַש[ה from Lev 22:1, instead of ]ל יֵש[רֵאֵל as a not otherwise attested variant reading of Lev 23:24 כֹּל בְּנֵי יִשְׂרָאֵל. One should possibly place the fragment at the left end of the column, חַדְשִׁים in line 2 then being the most left word. In that case Lev 23:24 started a new paragraph at the beginning of a line. However, whatever one does, one cannot nicely reconstruct all the lines of covered by the fragment on the basis of either the Samaritan or the Masoretic text.

In frag. 9 line 8 read

8 ]וידבר יהוה אל משה לאמר דבר א[ל אהרן[ ואל בניו ...

The older photographs still show an extending piece of skin with a trace which might be the top of *bet* or *nun* of בְּנֵי. This corrected reading affects the horizontal alignment of the reconstruction of the earlier lines. In line 2 read תֵּא[ב[. In line 5, I see no traces on any photograph of *qop-dalet* after אֵת.

#### 4. Material reconstruction of the scroll

The most important contribution of the new identification of frag. 5a and the reinterpretation of frag. 8 is the light they shed on the material reconstruction of the scroll. Frags. 3 and 8 taken together preserve the left end of a sheet with the stitching for eleven consecutive lines.<sup>12</sup> Frags. 5+5a contain the top margin and the right end of a sheet (with indirect evidence of six stitching holes).<sup>13</sup> One can combine these two data in several ways.

The distance (according to the Masoretic text) between the first line of frag. 3 (Lev 19:34 וְאֶהְבֵּת) to the first word of frag. 5 (Lev 20:27 אוֹב) requires ca. 44 lines, of the same width of a column as attested in frags. 3+4+8. If there were one or more paragraph breaks, this number would be higher. As a first model, one can assume that frag. 3 line 1 stemmed from the top of a column of 44 lines or more, and that frags. 3+4+8 and frags. 5+5a belonged to two consecutive columns.<sup>14</sup> If frag. 3 derived from the very top of the column, its stitching should join to that of frag. 5. Tov lists many scrolls with a “very large writing block” of 35 lines or more, most of which are copies of the texts of Isaiah or of one of the books of the Torah.<sup>15</sup> If 4Q26a had such a large writing block of 44 or more lines in a column that case, one should place frag. 6 a few lines beneath frags. 5+5a, namely in lines 9-13 or 10-14 of the same column, and more downwards in that same column frag. 7. Based on the amount of text, frag. 9 could derive from the very bottom of that same column, or perhaps from the top of the next one. This means that frags. 3-9 would derive from two, or perhaps three consec-

<sup>12</sup>Together they have 25 consecutive stitching holes, which are on average 2.8 mm apart.

<sup>13</sup>The colour photographs even show what seem to be remnants of the thread.

<sup>14</sup>The stitching holes seem to correspond exactly, if frag. 3 line 1 is placed side by side to frag. 5 line 1.

<sup>15</sup>Emanuel Tov, *Scribal Practices and Approaches Reflected in the Texts Found in the Judaean Desert* (STDJ 54; Leiden: Brill, 2004), 88-89. This includes 4QLev-Num<sup>a</sup>, 4QLev<sup>b</sup>, and 11QpaleoLev<sup>a</sup>.

utive columns of at least 44 lines per column. A column height of 44 or more lines per column would position frag. 1 at the bottom of the first column, and frag. 2 at the top of the second column. Unfortunately, all fragments are quite small, and it is not possible to corroborate this model with material correspondences between the fragments.

A second model needs to posit a missing sheet in between frags. 3 and 5. This would imply much shorter columns. For example, such a hypothesized missing sheet could have had two columns of 15-16 lines, in order to account for the relation between frags. 3 and 5. However, such short columns containing the entire book of Leviticus would give an unwieldy long (and thick) scroll with columns of very small dimensions. One would then have to assume a scroll with only parts of the book of Leviticus. The large textual gap between frags. 1-2 (Lev 3), and frags. 3-9 (Lev 19-22) might suggest such a collection. Also 4Q24 (4QLev<sup>b</sup>) contains only fragments with text from the beginning (Lev 1-3) and second part (Lev 21-25) of the book of Leviticus. However, I see no other indications for this hypothesis, and therefore prefer the assumption of the large writing block, and frags. 3 and 5 having been sewn together.

## 5. Textual and content implications

The newly identified frag. 5a, the reinterpretation of frag. 8, and the proposed reading of frag. 7 line 5, affect the list of preserved variants in the scroll: the nonaligned DJD reading of Lev 21:24 and the incorrectly recorded variant in 22:5 should be removed from this list, and the reading (אתם) with the Masoretic text against the Samaritan one in Lev 20:27 frag. 5a, should be added. However, given the available spacing in frags. 5+5a line 1, one would favor in the lost section the longer readings of the Samaritan text. Altogether, these changes do not dramatically transform the existing view of the textual character, namely that the scroll sometimes agrees with the Masoretic readings against Samaritan ones, sometimes the other way round, and occasionally has unique readings.<sup>16</sup>

The partial material reconstruction strongly indicates a large writing block. Since these are usually found in copies of larger works, it stands to reason that the scroll contained a version of the entire book of Leviticus, rather than excerpts or an abbreviated form.

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<sup>16</sup>Lange, *Handbuch*, 154, classifies this scroll, together with ten other ones, as “semimasoretic/presamaritan.”